

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 SAJ-01 OMB-01 SP-02 USIA-06

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NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 /086 W
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FM AMEMBASY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7705

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 13106

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR, JA

SUBJ: BREZHNEV'S MEETING WITH JAPANESE DELEGATION:
POLITICAL ASPECTS

1. SUMMARY. JAPANESE AMBASSADOR SHIGEMITSU TOLD ME ON AUG 18 THAT BREZHNEV WAS THE PICTURE OF HEALTH DURING HIS MEETING WITH A JAPANESE BUSINESSMEN'S DELEGATION ON AUG 13 IN YALTA. BREZHNEV DOMINATED THE MEETING AND WAS WELL BRIEFED. SHIGEMITSU DISCOUNTED REPORTS THAT THE BREZHNEV MEETING WAS ARRANGED IN PLACE OF A PLANNED KOSYGIN MEETING, AND SPECULATED THAT THE SOVIETS HAD GOOD REASONS FOR PROVIDING THIS HIGH-LEVEL SHOW OF CORDIALITY TO THE JAPANESE MEDIA AND PUBLIC. END SUMMARY.

2. I CALLED ON SHIGEMITSU ON AUG 18 TO ASK ABOUT THE VISIT BY THE DELEGATION FROM THE JAPANESE FEDERATION
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OF ECONOMIC ORGANIZATIONS (KEIDANREN), AND PARTICULARLY

ABOUT THE DELEGATION'S MEETING WITH BREZHNEV, WHICH SHIGEMITSU ATTENDED.

3. SHIGEMITSU SAID THAT THE MEETING LASTED MORE THAN THREE HOURS AND TOOK PLACE AT A VILLA ABOVE YALTA, IN THE SAME ROOM WHERE BREZHNEV MET CODEL ALBERT LAST SUMMER. BREZHNEV, SAID SHIGEMITSU, SEEMED TO BE IN VERY GOOD HEALTH, TALKED MOST OF THE TIME AND DOMINATED THE MEETING. HE NEITHER SMOKED NOR COUGHED, HIS EYES WERE SHARP, THERE WAS NO FACIAL PUFFINESS AND HE HAD LOST SOME WEIGHT. HIS PRONUNCIATION, ALTHOUGH STILL MARKED BY HIS USUAL CHRONIC DIFFICULTIES, WAS BETTER THAN USUAL. HE TOLD THE JAPANESE THAT HE SWIMS EVERY MORNING, INCLUDING TWO HOURS THE PREVIOUS DAY (WHICH HIS WIFE HAD SAID WAS TOO MUCH) AND ONE HOUR THAT DAY. BEFORE THE TALKS HE LED THE JAPANESE THROUGH STALIN'S DACHA, NEAR THE MEETING SITE, AND THROUGH CZAR ALEKSANDR III'S CASTLE AFTER THE MEETING.

4. ON REPORTS THAT A PLANNED KOSYGIN MEETING HAD BEEN CANCELLED DUE TO ILLNESS, SHIGEMITSU SAID THAT NO SUCH MEETING HAD BEEN SPECIFICALLY SCHEDULED AND THAT HE HAD NOT HEARD ANY SOVIET SAY ANYTHING ABOUT KOSYGIN BEING ILL. SHIGEMITSU SAID THAT THE JAPANESE HAD BEEN VERY WELL RECEIVED THROUGHOUT THEIR VISIT AND HE BELIEVED THAT THIS TREATMENT, INCLUDING THE BREZHNEV MEETING, WAS PART OF A CONSCIOUS SOVIET EFFORT TO MAKE A "BIG SPLASH" IN JAPAN.

5. SHIGEMITSU SPECULATED THAT THE SOVIETS HAD THREE MOTIVES FOR THIS HIGH-LEVEL ATTENTION:

---FIRST, IT IS A REACTION TO SECRETARY KISSINGER'S URGING OF GREATER COORDINATION AMONG WESTERN COUNTRIES IN THEIR TRADE AND CREDIT POLICIES TOWARD THE USSR AND EASTERN EUROPE. THE SOVIET UNION IS NERVOUS ABOUT THIS DEVELOPMENT AND WANTS TO SHOW THAT IT HAS OTHER SOURCES FOR TRADE AND CREDITS BESIDES THE U.S. AND WESTERN EUROPE.

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--- SECOND, CHINA; SHIGEMITSU DID NOT ELABORATE, BUT HE DID NOTE IN THE CONNECTION THAT JAPANESE EXPORTS TO THE PRC HAVE FALLEN OFF THIS YEAR WHILE THOSE TO THE SOVIET UNION HAVE RISEN; AND JAPANESE-PRC TREATY NEGOTIATIONS ARE AT A STANDSTILL. THUS, IN SHIGEMITSU'S VIEW, IT WAS A GOOD TIME FOR THE SOVIETS TO MAKE A PUSH TO MOVE RELATIONS ALONG A BIT.

--- THIRD, THE USSR HAS A BAD PUBLIC IMAGE IN JAPAN. AMONG THE REASONS FOR THIS, SHIGEMITSU CITED THE NORTHERN TERRITORIES ISSUE, THE FACT THAT THE GROMYKO VISIT DID NOT CREATE A GOOD IMAGE, THE RECENT MURDER OF A JAPANESE GIRL BY A SOVIET ON THE SOVIET SHIP WHICH PLIES TO NAKHODKA, AND THE EXPULSION BY THE SOVIETS OF A JAPANESE BUSINESSMAN IN RETALIATION FOR THE EARLIER JAPANESE ARREST OF A SOVIET FOR INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES IN JAPAN. THE SOVIETS, SAID SHIGEMITSU, HAD BEEN EXTRAORDINARILY ACCOMMODATING TO JAPANESE MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES IN YALTA, DEVELOPING THEIR FILM RAPIDLY AND PROVIDING SATELLITE TRANSMISSION FOR TELEVISION COVERAGE.

6. IN THE MEETING ITSELF, POLITICAL MATTERS WERE BARELY TOUCHED, SAID SHIGEMITSU, WITH BREZHNEV MAKING ONE OBLIQUE REFERENCE TO PRO-PRC CIRCLES IN JAPAN "WHO WORK TO HINDER THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOVIET-JAPANESE ECONOMIC COOPERATION". KEIDANREN CHAIRMAN DOKO HAD LITTLE TIME TO TALK, SAID SHIGEMITSU, BUT MENTIONED THE IMPORTANCE OF A "GOOD ATMOSPHERE" IN EACH COUNTRY ABOUT THE OTHER, A SENTIMENT WHICH BREZHNEV ENDORSED.

7. WHEN DOKO ASKED BREZHNEV WHETHER HE PLANNED TO VISIT JAPAN, BREZHNEV REPLIED THAT HE HAD ACCEPTED AN INVITATION "IN PRINCIPLE", BUT THAT NO DATES HAD BEEN SET.

8. SHIGEMITSU SAID THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR POLYANSKIY'S ABSENCE FROM THE MEETING HAD NO SIGNIFICANCE, SINCE THE JAPANESE GROUP WAS NOT A GOVERNMENT DELEGATION. HE ADDED THAT THE HEAD OF THE SOVIET TRADE OFFICE IN TOKYO WAS PRESENT AND THAT THIS WAS THE APPROPRIATE
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REPRESENTATION.

9. ECONOMIC TOPICS BEING REPORTED SEPTEL.
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